



WALTER BURRELL

Hollywood Happenings

Who ever heard of a Negro cowboy?

A DECADE ago this would have been a valid question, but thanks to a brilliant book by two USC professors titled "The Negro Cowboys" and its widespread publicity in both the white and Negro press, the long-buried facts regarding the black man's part in the settling of the West are finally receiving national prominence.

It isn't surprising, then, that we've seen a rash of black cowboys portrayed on our television and movie screens.

Sidney Poitier played a fancy-Dan, gambling cowboy in "Duel At Diablo." Don Mitchell recently appeared on "The Virginian" as a member of an outlaw gang. Sammy Davis, Jr., is reportedly one of the fastest guns in show business.

And now, on Oct. 31st, Bernie Hamilton (brother of jazz great Chico Hamilton) has been teamed with Henry Fonda and Sal Mineo as a good cowboy who happens to be on the wrong side of the law in "Stranger On The Run."

"It's still a little surprising," Bernie admits, "seeing a black face behind a heavy, western drawl or chewing lazily on a chunk of tobacco, but that's only because we're still getting used to the idea."

"THE SIMPLE truth of the matter is that there were black men in America's Southwest as early as the 16th century. Estavenico was mapping the area for the Spanish before white settlers even thought of Jamestown.

"Later, while black slaves tended cotton fields in the South, Negroes were branding cattle, robbing banks, staging main street shoot-outs and breaking wild broncos in the West."

The fact that Bernie dons spurs, saddle and holster is even less surprising after taking even the briefest look at his potpourri background. He's been a stage manager, electrician, house manager, set designer, janitor, gas station attendant and cement mixer.

He even owned two art galleries--one in Los Angeles, the other in Beverly Hills. In addition, for the past eleven years he's operated a Christmas tree lot on Sunset Blvd. in Hollywood.

An unusual background for a cowboy. AS AN ACTOR, however, his first speaking part was in "The Jackie Robinson Story" and he has since appeared on television in "Alfred Hitchcock Presents," "G.E. Theatre," "Ben Casey," "Chrysler Theatre," "The Dick Van Dyke Show," and many other shows.

On the big screen he's been seen in films with everyone from Spencer Tracy and Gary Cooper to Frank Sinatra and Sammy Davis, Jr. His most recent success was a starring role in "One Potato, Two Potato," the moving story of an interracial marriage.

"But the part in 'Stranger On The Run' is different from other roles I played," says Bernie, "and not just because I'm cast as a cowboy. Most characters are either good or bad; either for the law or against it.

"However, this time the law is wrong; they're hounding an innocent man (Fonda), whom their leader knows, or at least suspects, is innocent. As Fonda's friend, I'm placed in opposition to the law, yet I still come off as a 'good guy'.

"Not that I'm that keen on playing 'good guy' roles. After all, if we're going to be honest we'd have to admit that it's the meanest crook in a movie who's often remembered by audiences. Also, the heavy's role usually has more dimension and room for dramatic expression than the hero's.

"And come to think of it, going out in a blazing gun battle is better than riding off into the sunset any day."

Caesar's Palace Snags Bikel For "Fiddler" Run



NEWCOMER--When Henry Fonda arrives in a small Western town he gets directions to the nearest bar from cowboy Bernie Hamilton in this scene from "Stranger On The Run," airing Oct. 31st on NBC-TV.

It's Called Commitment

CHICAGO - (NPI)--When singer Della Reese dedicates herself to a cause, she really goes the limit.

The dynamic song stylist last week passed up a tempting \$25,000 offer to appear at the fabulous Sands Hotel in Las Vegas, to headline the sixth annual Chicago Urban League Golden Fellowship dinner-dance benefit at the Conrad Hilton Hotel.

She appeared free, but was in effect helping the league to raise funds to provide minorities with greater opportunities in jobs, education and housing.

Black "Kibbutz" Planned

BROOKLYN, N.Y. - (NPI)--This borough's CORE chapter is planning to build a black community "somewhere in the South," and the community's model is the Israeli "kibbutz"--an agricultural settlement largely responsible for building the Jewish nation out of arid wasteland.

The plans aren't final yet, but the chapter has taken an option on property where an all-black colony will be built at an undisclosed site.

According to the chapter's chairman, Robert (Sonny) Carson, Negroes need to return to the soil because they are "becoming infected with the same sickness" as whites. CORE, he said, hopes to offer a "kibbutz type of communal living" at the settlement.

Carson considers the project the "only way we can save our culture and ourselves." Negroes had better find a place for themselves, he added, as whites "are not going to need us in another five years."

The CORE chairman's announcement came a month after he asserted that his chapter would stop fighting civil-rights-type battles and would "retire to the positions of our forefathers--back to the soil."

THOSE INVOLVED in the kibbutz-like project will be "moved in" by the middle of next April, he said. The settlement's population, to start at 1,500, is expected to reach 7,000 by 1972.

"About \$700,000" will be required to build the community, to be located on a 900-acre site.

Carson announced his colony not long after Floyd McKissick, national CORE director, disclosed plans to build a similar all-black community.

McKissick has urged that Northern Negroes develop their economic strength as Southern Negroes have done.

He noted that Southern Negroes have built their own banks and companies, while Northern Negro areas continue to be controlled economically by whites.

Internationally famed artist, Theodore Bikel signed to play the starring role of Teyve in the national company of "Fiddler on the Roof," scheduled for a minimum of six months at Caesars Palace, beginning December 28.

Bikel, who has appeared all over the world as an actor, folk singer, guitarist, author, lecturer, photographer, politician, linguist and raconteur, will be making his first appearance at Caesars Palace and in Las Vegas.

"Fiddler's" first team of creators on Broadway, including producer Harold Prince, stager and choreographer Jerome Robbins, and authors Sheldon Harnick, Jerry Bock and Joseph Stein, will personally supervise this production of one of the most highly acclaimed musical hits of all time. As was the case with Caesars Palace's recent record-breaking engagement of "Sweet Charity," "Fiddler" will not be presented in a tabloid version, but with the same high artistic qualities of its fabulously successful Broadway presentation.

BIKEL, WHO WAS Mary Martin's leading man on Broadway in "The Sound of Music," made his major acting debut in Laurence Olivier's London stage production of "A Street Car Named Desire," and has since been seen in such memorable films as "The African Queen," "The Defiant Ones," "I Want to Live," "The Little Kidnappers," "The Pride and The Passion," "The Enemy Below," and "My Fair Lady." He has just completed roles in three additional films, "Sweet November," "Beyond the Mountain," and "The Other Side of the Mountain," and will be seen this season on the ABC-TV special, "The Diary of Anne Frank" and on an NBC "Hallmark Hall of Fame."

"Fiddler on the Roof," winner of nine "Tony" awards and the New York Drama Critic's award for "Best Musical of the Year," is in its fourth year at New York's Majestic Theatre, where it has never played to an empty seat. The musical has so far grossed over \$20,000,000 in the United States alone and has been seen by more than four million American playgoers. Internationally, it has been acclaimed in London, Sydney, Tokyo, Helsinki, Tel Aviv Rotterdam. Upcoming productions are scheduled for Norway, Sweden, West Germany and East Germany.

CAESARS PALACE, one of the newest and largest of the resort hotels in Las Vegas, has established itself in its first year of operation as the world's greatest theatrical showcase, renewing interest in Broadway musicals with "Sweet Charity" and meeting great success with the unorthodox booking of a non-musical production, "The Odd Couple." The hotel's Circus Maximus Theatre-restaurant, which has the largest nightclub stage in the world, will also be housing "Mame" next year, as well as such show business giants as Frank Sinatra, Harry Belafonte, Andy Williams, Andy Griffith and the current star Tony Bennett.

Support Merchants who Support Your Press

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

EL RIO CLUB

GAMBLING CASINO

and
CHINESE-AMERICAN RESTAURANT

★ Wine

★ Liquor

★ KENO

★ "21"

★ CRAPS

★ Beer

★ Barbecue

★ KENO

★ "21"

★ CRAPS

TRY OUR BRAND NEW SLOTS

REVERE & "H" STREETS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★